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## Cypriots use Geography to Bridge Gaps and Form a European Identity

How is it possible that two communities that live on the same island see themselves as living on different continents? Do both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots view themselves (and each other) as European? Is Cyprus portrayed differently in the Turkish Cypriot textbooks than in the Greek Cypriot textbooks?



Portrayal of Cyprus as would be seen in the GCC geography textbooks (top) and the TCC textbooks (bottom)

The Department of Education Sciences of the European University Cyprus and the POST Research Institute, with funding from USAID's UNDP-ACT project, held a two-day seminar that addressed these questions and more, while focusing on the role that geography plays in the formation of a European "identity." The key note speakers at the seminar discussed the way that young people learn about Europe, in geography class and beyond. A bicomunal team of researchers presented the findings of their comparative analysis of maps and other geography curricula used on both sides of the island, including a detailed look at the differences in the two sides' geography textbooks.

## Talking Trade across the Green Line

As part of its efforts to promote dialogue, collaboration and trade between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot businesses, EDGE organizes regular roundtables between the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Industry. Their January 29 session focused on trying to resolve continued problems related to trade across the dividing Green Line and on analyzing trade patterns and preferences in order to better address bottlenecks. The group agreed to invite their larger boards to the next meeting, which will be a brainstorming session on how the "TriChamber Forum" and business leaders can compliment the political process that is expected to begin anew after the Greek Cypriot elections at the end of February.



*The mission of USAID/Cyprus is to encourage cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot individuals and organizations to reduce tensions and promote a climate that will foster reconciliation and a durable peace settlement.*

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*SAVE*

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Over twenty people took part in the fourth GIS Users Group meeting on January 30 where the focus was on practical applications of GIS and techniques such as geo-coding, geo-referencing, rectification and map digitization. Enthusiasm for SAVE's GIS/land use planning activity continues and is now matched by an increased amount of data sharing and collaboration from local partners. Eight water managers departed for Austin and Denver to participate in a SAVE-organized train-the-trainers course in groundwater management from February 4-15. Documentation work at the mosaics at Soli is near completion, with a joint visit by mosaics experts David Neal and Father Michele Picciorillo who have finalized a plan for publication of results.

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*REAP*

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The Energy Professionals' Association is up and running, with subcommittees on membership, training and development, and advocacy already in full swing. REAP continues to work with the TC electricity utility and energy and finance experts to finalize the draft energy sector "law". The TC electricity utility's "bylaws" are next on the agenda. The unbundling workshop held in mid-January was a success, with TC electricity utility representatives agreeing that at a minimum functional unbundling will take place. A study tour to Ireland is planned for March. In accordance with REAP recommendations, electricity "tariffs" were raised on January 23. The tender period for Phase II energy efficiency installations was extended due to lack of response.

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*EDGE*

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Over eighty people participated in the "Business Opportunity for Biodiesel Production" event organized by EDGE's agriculture team on January 30. The agriculture team also continues its work in alternative crops (organizing a study tour for six TC caper producers and providing continued technical assistance to the pomegranate farmers) and in dairy-related products (providing training in standards and animal health/hygiene to farmers and supporting halloumi cheese producers that are finalizing deals with regional buyers). Association building work continues with both the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industry as well as with the newly established IT Association and the long dysfunctional, but critically important, tour guides and travel agents associations.

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*ACT*

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The draft "Assessment Report of the Legal and Regulatory Framework Affecting NGOs in the Republic of Cyprus" has been completed and will be disseminated to all parties interviewed. Following their review, the relevant stakeholders will convene, under the auspices of UNDP-ACT, to begin a dialog about the report and the issues it addresses. We've now received detailed cost estimates for the restoration work at the Armenian Church and Monastery. A meeting will be held next week to review the cost estimates and make the next round of decisions.

## Supporting Cypriot Honey *BEE*Siness



*By helping one small, but visionary, beekeeper, USAID has been able to at once protect the endangered Cypriot honey bee and promote sustainable economic development in the Turkish Cypriot Community. On February 2, USAID organized a site visit to Kantara Honey for the Embassy community. Thanks to assistance from SAVE and EDGE, Kantara Honey has begun to implement EU standards for production and quality and will increase his sales, including exports to the Middle East, by over 30%.*

### News from Nicosia

#### February 4

Promoting Private Sector Development Task Order Finalized

#### February 4-9

Visit of State Department Cyprus Desk Officer Terry Netos

#### February 17

Round 1 of Greek Cypriot Presidential Elections

#### February 24

Round 2 of Greek Cypriot Presidential Elections

## Our Projects

- The **Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT)** program mainstreams the concepts of conflict resolution in over 120 projects that encourage Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to work on issues of common concern and solve problems together. Projects are currently underway in the areas of youth, education and tolerance, civil society strengthening, sustainable development and cultural heritage preservation. ACT is funded through a cooperative agreement between USAID and the UN Development Program (UNDP).
- The **Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth (CyPEG)** includes activities that support economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community to decrease the disparities between the communities and promote reconciliation. CyPEG is implemented by U.S. contractors under different USAID contract mechanisms.
  - The objective of the **Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises (EDGE)** project is to strengthen the domestic and international competitiveness of Turkish-Cypriot small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and help restructure the financial sector so that SMEs can thrive.
  - The **Resource Efficiency Achievement Program (REAP)** promotes more efficient use of water and energy by conducting audits and upgrades of representative business establishments and households. REAP also provides technical assistance to Turkish Cypriot energy experts.
  - The **Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE)** project focuses on improving (1) the competitiveness, financial status, and quality of basic services and infrastructure to more easily meet international and EU standards and (2) Turkish Cypriot capacity to manage natural and cultural resources for economic growth.